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DANNY  
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image

87

DIGITAL  
EDITION

TODD MCFARLANE AND IMAGE COMICS PRESENT...

# FOLKLORE



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SPAWN 86 Summary

After Cog is unable to reason with Spawn, the ghost of Al Simmons appears to him and they have a heart-to-heart talk. Spawn's epiphany comes when he kills his own ghost. He then returns to the alleys a changed man refusing to be a pawn in someone else's game. He announces to Cog that he is quitting.

DEDICATED TO  
*Kenny Coric*



TODD MCFARLANE  
PRODUCTIONS



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New York is a city built on ghosts.

Close your eyes and you can hear them. Look quickly enough and you may see them:

The still-born dreams of immigrant souls, delivered to Ellis Island by black draped coffin ships...

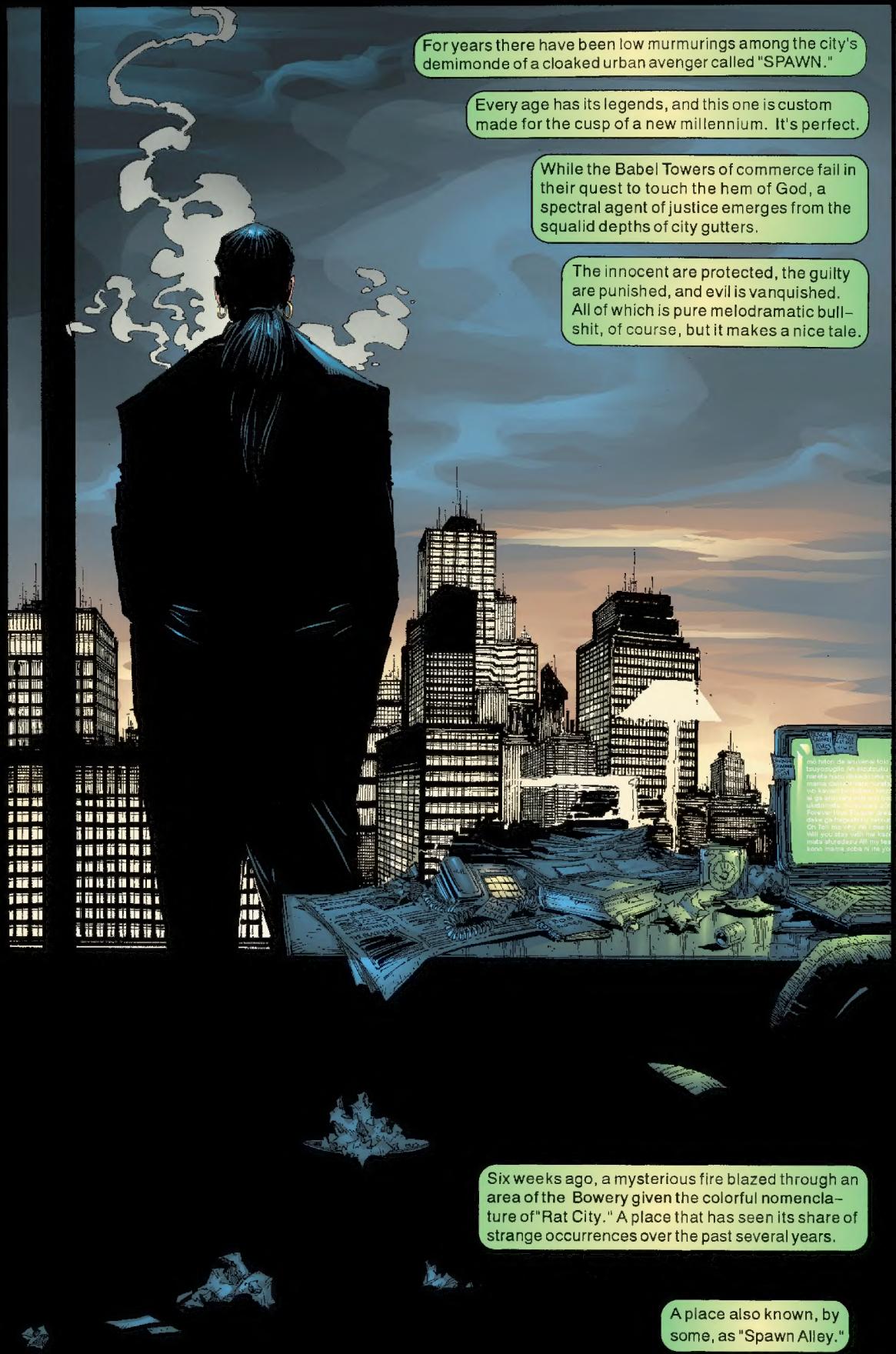
The leaping suicide bankers of 1929...

The sky-walking Iroquois laborers buried beneath the colossal marble pediments of Manhattan skyscrapers...

The ceaseless stream of mob bosses, careless bystanders, buxom coeds and reclusive pop stars murdered in the street...

By now every inch of this city must be haunted.

But there is only one ghost which haunts me.



WHAT?  
YES, OF  
COURSE I'M  
WORKING ON--  
NO. NO--  
IT WILL BE  
READY WHEN  
IT IS--

MY WHAT?  
MY ADVANCE?  
DON'T YOU DARE  
SPEAK TO  
ME--

NO, YOU  
WILL LISTEN TO  
ME. NOW, I  
RECOGNIZE THAT  
AS AN EDITOR  
YOU HAVE NO  
SOUL, BUT I  
WILL NOT-- I  
WILL NOT--

OBSSESSED?  
WHAT ON  
EARTH ARE YOU--?  
NO! NO! GODDAMNIT,  
I AM NOT HAVING  
THIS  
CONVERSATION.

DON'T  
INTERRUPT ME! I'M  
HANGING UP. I AM  
HANGING UP. PLEASE  
ROUTE ALL FUTURE  
PARANOIAC OUT-  
BURSTS THROUGH  
MY AGENT, ALL  
RIGHT?

YOU'LL  
GET IT WHEN  
YOU GET IT. NO.  
NO I AM NOT--  
I--

I AM NOT  
OBSESSED...

GO TO  
HELL!

SEAM!

DEAD  
LINE

INTERVIEW #7  
"Stiv and Lyssa"



So what... do I just start? Cool. Okay. Yeah, I've heard of Spawn. I useta scam down near the alleys. Dudes 'round there were pretty cool.



Mostly they're old guys, though. It gets really depressing with the old guys. Like they're never gonna change. Whatever you are at 40, that's what you'll be foreva, right? Not me, though. I got plans. Don't we, hon? Big plans.



So yeah, Spawn. I heard he's a black dude. They did something to him in the war. Like gave him superpowers. Mutation experiment or something. All kinds of weird alien shit. Like in that movie, the one with that guy from the other one. No?



I saw him a couple times, Spawn, I mean. Never talked to him though. I just kinda kept my distance. Struck me as the kinda guy who appreciates his privacy, know what I'm saying?



What?  
(unintelligible)



So, uh, listen dude... Are we like getting paid for this or what?

INTERVIEW #11  
"Jaka"



You here to make me famous, friend? Is that what this is about? To bring my god-given talent to the people, let me shine a little righteous light into this dark, dark world? All right. I'm ready for my close-up, mister man!



Spawn? Listen, brother, you don't want to go there. That's messin' wit' some deep-dark-hella-evil-mikki-fikkin'-mojo there. Alla that devil crap? Man, just leave it out. Why you wanna know 'bout sumpin' like that?



Nah, I ain't never seen him. But my pal Rudi has. Saw him skin a man alive and feed him to his dogs. And he's got this stare, right? Just holds you to the spot. Hypnotic, like. He's one messed up cat, I can tell you that much.



You ask me, I think its some kinda voodoo-zombie shit. My granddaddy was a magic man down in N'awlins, he knew all about that crap. He was a healer. One time, when I was kid, I saw him cast seven devils outta his ol' whore.



YAAAAA-AAGHOOOA!  
HAAAGH! An' alla demons come pourin' outcher mouth, like bats and snakes and lizards. Like you're pukin' up a zoo or something. Don't play wit' that stuff, I'm telling you. For real.



Walk the path of the righteous man, my brother. The devil is everywhere and it only takes one moment of weakness. You best be keeping your eyes open in this bitch world. Know'm say'n?

INTERVIEW #14  
"Willie, Chet and Bigfoot"



-Yeah, we knew 'im. Real well, too.  
-Oh yeah, I was right there when he torched --  
-Pals we were. His posse, like in the westerns  
-Man I love westerns. Ever see that one, 'bout that bad ass sheriff --



-Hey remember the time he fought that big metal dude, Robo-wop or whatever? What was his name? The pentium Guinea?  
-Oh, man, was that sweet! He got him by the throat like this. Wa-POW!



-And then the robot dude, he gets Spawny in a headlock, like grinding his nose into the pavement. It was brutal  
-No. That's not how it (unintelligible) happened. Let go of my (unintelligible)...



-Those were the days, man. Kickin' ass, takin' names. Before he got all morose and moody.  
-Yeah. I miss the big guy. I really do. As far as walking corpses go, he was the best.  
-Hey, what ever happened to that freaky monkey?  
-Uh oh...



Hey... uh... sorry 'bout your shoes, dude.

INTERVIEW #14  
"Bobby"



I guess I'd like to think we were friends. I know that sounds weird, but that's how it felt to me. I remember when he first came here, some of the other guys wanted him to leave. Not that you could make him leave or anything like that...



But I always said, hey, he's one of us. Poor sucker's lost his home, his family, his whole life. Just tryin' ta make the best out of a bad situation. Isn't that what we're all doing? All of us?



But I never thought he'd just up and leave like that. It was really hard. That last night, before it happened, you could see something in him had changed. Something switched over in him for good, and that was that.



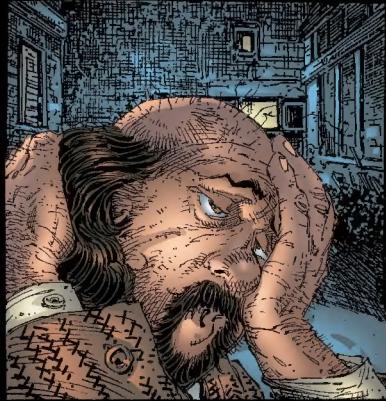
I don't blame him or nothing. Like I said, it's just really hard. See a while back, I lost another friend. His name was Bootsy. At least that's what we called him. Real smart guy. Always looked after me. Closer than brothers.



Turns out Bootsy was an angel. An' I don't mean that like he was a nice guy, but that he was an actual, real life angel, sent to watch over us. He saved Spawn's life once. And then he had to leave. Said he'd always look out for me, though.



But it don't feel like anyone's looking out for ol' Bobby these days. Every year, these old bones get a little creakier, the days seem a little shorter. Every day, it's like there's just less of me. Excuse me. Gimme a sec, will ya?



Let me tell you something about Spawn, I don't think anyone ever really understood... Well, to tell the truth, I think he was lonely. Sounds funny, I know, big tough guy like that. But I really think he was.



I mean, I know what it's like to feel you ain't got nothing in this world. Like no matter what you do, you're best days are long behind you and even they were pretty crappy now that you think about it.



Sometimes things get so bleak, you just gotta laugh. Most people don't know this, but ol' Al could have quite a sense of humor when the mood struck him. He had this real deep, booming laugh. I remember once -- Wait. I'm sorry.



Not "Al." Spawn. Spawn. Not Al. He told me not to call him that no more. "Never speak that name again," that's what he said. I'm sorry. I just forgot for a minute. Do you think you can maybe cut that part out?



Anyways... I know I'm rambling, I'm sorry... I guess I'm saying sometimes this world gets so cold, and sometimes the only thing you have to keep you from going under is your friends, and then they go and leave you and...



I'm sorry. Can we just stop now. Please?

INTERVIEW #17  
"Sam and Twitch"



-Actually, we're "Ex"-ex-cops now. Come Monday, we are once again part of the Thin Blue Line that separates civilization from anarchy.\*  
- "Thin" being used rather metaphorically here, of course.  
- Bite me Twitch. So what did ya want to know about?

- "Health Spa?" Twitch, you know anything about a health spa? Huh? Oh, "Hell Spawn." Gotcha. Scourge of the alleys, caped avenger of New York City? The urban bogeyman, Spawn the Undead? Nah. Never heard of him.

-Although there was one caped marauder as I recall, sir. Do you remember?  
- Oh, jeez. I almost forgot. This was years ago, we're still in uniform back then. Get some call about a woman being attacked by a crazed super hero.

\*see "Sam and Twitch #1" for details.



-So we get to the place, check it out. Naked woman tied to her bed; some dude out cold on the floor wearing a Batman mask, a cape, and goddamn nothing else. So what do I do? I go to cuff the intruder.

-And then the broad starts screeching: "Stop it! You'll kill him!" Turns out it was some kinda kinky game. Chick's boy friend would dress up like an idiot and pounce on her from on top the dresser. Got her real hot.

-Only this time the poor bastard knocks his head on the ceiling lamp. Boom! Out like a light. So she's tied up, her boyfriend is in a coma for she knows, and she screams blue murder. Man, I seen some weird crap in my time, but that takes the goddamn cake!

INTERVIEW #20  
"Wanda and Terry"



Yes?

-Good evening. I don't mean to bother you. I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions--

-What is this about?

-I understand you've had contact with someone called Spawn.

-What?!

-Just a moment of your time. Please. Now correct me if I'm wrong, but your first husband, his name was Al, right? Al Simmons...

Slam



-What do you think you're doing, upsetting my wife like that?  
-I'm sorry. If I could just ask a few questions I'd greatly appreciate --  
-You know what, little man?

-I would greatly appreciate it if you got the hell off my property before I have to stick my foot up your ass. How's that for a goddamn quote?

INTERVIEW #22  
"Corgie"



I'm not making no claims about nothing. I only know what I saw, and like I told you that ain't much. It was maybe six months ago, a little after eleven in the p.m. I remember that 'cause the Met had just got out.



So I pick up this fare and we're headin' towards Soho, when BAM! something comes out of nowhere. Out of the sky, like. Falls smack bang on the hood of my ride. I thought a bomb went off.



I mean look at that. You want proof, there it is. You see, whatever it was did some real damage. You'd think that woulda killed a person. I hit the brakes and this, this guy or this thing rolls off on to the ground.



I stare at him for maybe one second, but it felt like forever. I mean I can't believe what's going on. I'm thinking I'm gonna lose my hack license for squashing a ped, but this guy just stands up. I remember his eyes. Green, like cat's eyes in the dark.



And then he was gone. It happened so fast I wouldn't believe it if it weren't for the damage he done. Meanwhile I got a couple fares in back panicking, wondering what's going on. It was a peculiar night.



Never saw him again and still have no idea what the hell that thing was. But I tell you one thing. It was real. And whatever it was, they don't write insurance for crap like that. No sir, they sure don't.

INTERVIEW #24  
"Identity Unknown"



I understand you are inquiring about the existence of some mysterious urban avenger. The Hell Spawn? How fascinating. May I ask you, have you met with much success?



Oh, no. I'm afraid I couldn't be of any help to you. I have little experience with such sordid matters. Dark alleys, blood oaths, vengeance from beyond the grave... No, really not my cup of tea.



I was just curious to know the results of your research. If you had found any concrete evidence regarding this creature's existence. Personal interest. Let's just leave it at that, shall we?



Of course, I realize you have a publisher. And I can appreciate that a contract is a contract. After all, we are nothing if we cannot keep our word, wouldn't you agree?



But anything you turn up -- particularly the Spawn's current whereabouts -- well, let's just say I am in a position to discuss a very generous bargain, should you be so inclined.



Oh no, that won't be necessary. Believe me, when the time comes I will know how to contact you. Good evening, then.

I WANT TO BEGIN BY GETTING SOME COVERAGE OF--

I DON'T KNOW, THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLACE--

-- IT'S REALLY GIVING ME THE CREEPS, YOU KNOW?

IT'S VERY SIMPLE. WE ARE GOING TO SPEND THE NIGHT HERE. YOU WILL SHOOT WHAT I TELL YOU TO SHOOT, RECORD WHAT I TELL YOU TO RECORD.

NO ONE SAID ANYTHING TO ME ABOUT SPENDING THE NIGHT IN A **HELL HOLE** LIKE THIS.

DON'T BE SILLY. THIS ISN'T A BOSNIAN DEATH CAMP, IT'S A NEW YORK CITY ALLEY.

THAT'S KIND OF OUR POINT THERE, CHIEF.

I AM PAYING YOU AN OBSCENE AMOUNT OF MONEY. YOU WILL SCRAPE THE EXCREMENT FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY SHOE WITH YOUR TEETH IF I ASK IT.

NOW, LET'S GET TO WORK.

JEEZUS, IT'S A RAT!

**W**

THAT'S IT. I'M OUTTA HERE. I AIN'T GETTING RABIES JUST FOR SOME GOLDEN TIME.

DITTO.

GET BACK HERE! WE HAVE A CONTRACT!

TAKE IT UP WITH THE UNION!

12:05  
A.M. . .

LEFT TO MY OWN DEVICES, I MAKE A RECONNAISSANCE OF THE GENERAL AREA. IT'S MUCH LARGER THAN I EXPECTED AND STILL LARGELY DESERTED.

ADMITTEDLY I AM NOT AN EXPERT, BUT FROM WHAT I CAN TELL, THE FIRE THAT SWEPT THROUGH HERE WAS HIGHLY IRREGULAR.

SOME AREAS ARE SCORCHED SO DEEP, THE BRICKS HAVE MELTED... YET FLAMMABLE SURFACES NEAR-BY REMAIN UNTouched.

IT IS ALMOST AS IF THE FIRE HAD A SPECIFIED OBJECTIVE.

AS A PERSONAL OBSERVATION, IT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE THAT ANYONE WOULD INTENTIONALLY CHOOSE THIS PLACE AS A HOME.

IT IS FETID AND MUSTY AND REEKS OF ANCIENT GARBAGE.

IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG, DARK NIGHT AHEAD.



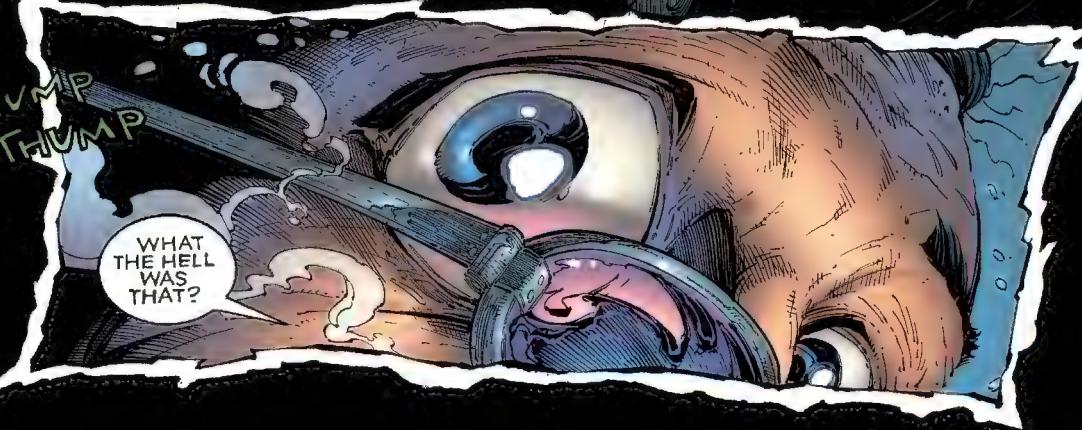
3:15 A.M. . . .  
THE LAST OF  
THE COFFEE IS  
GONE. THE  
CAFFEINE IS  
MAKING ME  
JITTERY.

FUNNY, ALONE  
IN THE DARK WITH  
ONE'S THOUGHTS  
LIKE THIS, IT... IT  
CAN BE VERY  
DISCONCERTING.

EVERY  
SOUND, EVERY  
SHIFT OF THE  
COUNTLESS,  
OVERLAPPING  
SHADOWS AND MY  
MUSCLES  
LEAP WITH  
ADRENALINE.

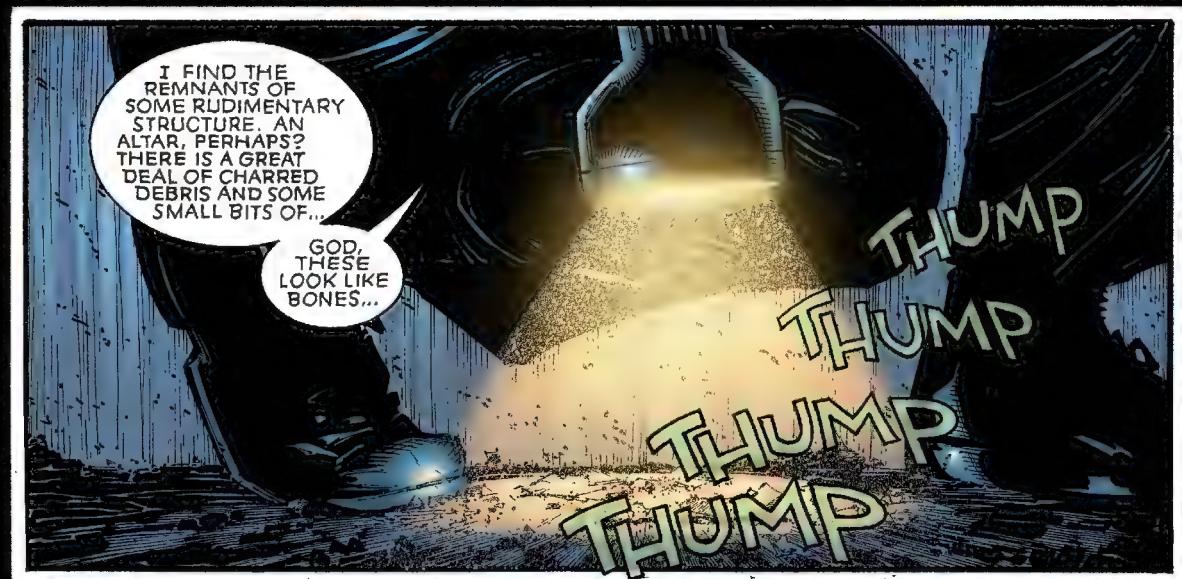
I STILL  
DON'T KNOW  
WHAT I'M  
EXPECTING TO  
FIND, BUT I  
WILL REMAIN  
TILL  
SUNRISE.

COME OUT,  
COME OUT  
WHEREVER  
YOU ARE...



THUMP  
THUMP

WHAT  
THE HELL  
WAS  
THAT?



WHERE  
IS-- I HAVE  
TRACKED THE  
NOISE TO AN  
OLD BOARDED-UP  
WINDOW.

THUMP-  
THUMP!

THUMP-  
THUMP!

THUMP-  
THUMP!

I CAN'T  
SEE ANY--

SKREE!

SKREE!

KRAK!

KRAK!

HAAAHH!

SKREE!

SON  
OF A  
BITCH.

AAAAAH!

NO! PLEASE!

FOR THE  
LOVE OF GOD,  
**WHAT  
ARE  
YOU?**







PLEASE. I GOTTA KNOW. I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE BOOK, OR ABOUT THE-- THE MONEY OR ANY OF THAT. I JUST WANT TO KNOW. FOR ME.

THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON. I'VE SEEN IT. BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.

SOMETHING HAPPENED IN THOSE ALLEYS, GODDAMN IT, AND I JUST HAVE TO KNOW WHAT IT IS. I CAN'T SLEEP TILL I KNOW.

PLEASE. I'M BEGGING YOU. JUST TELL ME THE TRUTH.

THAT'S ALL I WANT.

TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT SPAWN.

THE TRUTH? VERY WELL, I'LL TELL YOU. BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT. FUNNY THING ABOUT LIFE. THE TRUTH IS ALMOST NEVER WHAT YOU HOPED IT WOULD BE.

THE TRUTH IS THIS: THERE IS NO SPAWN.

THERE NEVER WAS.

JUST SOME OLD FOOLS TELLING STORIES AROUND THE BONFIRE, TRYING TO PASS THE TIME.

YOU'RE CHASING A SHADOW, MR. CRONE. NOTHING MORE. THAT'S THE REAL TRUTH.



THE HELL  
WITH IT...



"This city was built on ghosts.  
Maybe some of  
them deserve to  
rest in peace."

THESE RAVENS  
BELONG TO  
PAWN

NEXT: AT THE  
**CROSSROADS**





Tyrant  
Lizard  
King

EMPIRE

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